

## OUR LADY OF MT CARMEL - ST BENEDICTA CHURCH

### STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

The stained glass windows were designed and executed by the Willet Studios of Philadelphia, and installed when the church was built, 1968-1970. The process used was the same by which the earliest stained glass windows were made in the Middle Ages: colored glass joined with strips of grooved lead. The designs are simple, not ornate, in keeping with the architectural style of the church.

In the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, where daily Mass is celebrated, two scenes occupy the entire wall, in vibrant color: the Baptism of Jesus and the Last Supper. This reminds the viewer of two principal events in the life of Christ, and of the origin of two important rituals of the Church -- the celebration of Baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist. *(Note: The chapel was originally used for baptisms. In the early 1990's the baptismal font was moved to its present position, and the chapel was remodeled as a place for daily Mass and the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.)*



The windows of the nave are done in softer colors, perhaps to give more prominence to the sanctuary, with its three centers of attention: the altar, the ambo / pulpit, and the baptismal font. The scenes and saints of these windows are executed in the so-called German style, with trace lines delineating the forms, like a drawing on glass with no shading.

### BIBLICAL SCENES:

On the Castleton Avenue side of the church, two angels draw attention to two celebrations, each of which depicts the triumph of good over evil.

The first angel, with a knife, is guarding the home of a Hebrew family in Egypt, whose doorpost is marked with the blood of the Passover lamb. This recalls the Exodus, the Old Testament story of the Passover, in which God liberates the slaves from the power of Pharaoh and gives them a new life.

The second angel, from the New Testament, is seated on the tomb of Jesus, and proclaims to three women that Jesus has been raised from the dead. After shedding his own blood, the Paschal Lamb is given new and eternal life. This is the Good News of God's victory over evil, through which Jesus gives new life to all believers.

Facing each other across the nave are the four Evangelists: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN. Each of them are shown with a book, for through their writings the four Gospels became the four pillars of the Christian faith. Their other symbols are derived from the four beasts of the Apocalypse, chapter four.

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ST JOHN is shown with seven seals, as described in the Apocalypse, chapter five. Next to John is a large representation of the risen and glorious Jesus, with signs of his victory: Earth surmounted with a cross, seven stars and seven gold lampstands, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, as described in the Apocalypse, chapter one.

ST LUKE is shown as an ox. Nearby is the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, whose story occupies so much of Luke's Gospel, chapters one and two.

ST MARK is shown as a winged lion. In the same window Jesus appears as a king, at the time of his entry into Jerusalem.

ST MATTHEW is shown as a man with wings. In the same window Jesus is shown preaching the Sermon on the Mount, as found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapters five, six, and seven.

## **WINDOWS DEPICTING INDIVIDUAL SAINTS:**

### ***IN THE VESTIBULE***

The vestibule and entrance windows contain the figures of individual saints.

On the right hand side of the vestibule are found St Ann, the Virgin Mary, and St Therese. ST ANN is shown holding a book, as she teaches her daughter, the Virgin Mary. MARY is shown as the woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, as described in the book of Revelation, chapter twelve.

ST THERESE OF LISIEUX, a Carmelite nun from the age of fifteen, always strove to become a saint by her "little way" of simplicity and perfection. When dying, she promised: "After my death I will let fall a shower of roses" -- and so she is pictured with a rose.

On the left hand side of the vestibule are found windows dedicated to ST ANTHONY OF PADUA, ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, and ST VINCENT PALLOTTI, who died in 1850 and was declared to be a saint in 1963. He was the founder of the Congregation of the Pallotine Sisters, who taught in the parish school at the time the church was built.

### ***IN THE CHURCH***

Upon entering the church, the first window on the right is dedicated to Mary, under the title of OUR LADY OF MT CARMEL, the patroness of the church, (together with St Benedicta, whose window is found in a corresponding site on the left.) Our Lady of Mt Carmel is shown as she appeared in a vision to St Simon Stock. Both Mary and the Child Jesus wear crowns, and Jesus holds the scapular.

Next to Mary is ST JOSEPH, her husband, the foster father of Jesus. He wears a carpenter's apron and holds his saw and carpenter's square.

St BENEDICTA, on the left side, was a Roman matron of the fourth century. She had the courage to stand up to the Emperor himself in defense of her Christianity. Therefore, she lost her life. She is shown holding two crosses, a chalice, and a martyr's palm.

Next to her is a window dedicated to the great love of God, symbolized in the SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

